

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 COME-00 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05

RSC-01 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-01 OMB-01 CEA-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 PA-01

PRS-01 USIA-06 AGR-05 IO-10 /081 W

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R 091337Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1028

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2521

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, SA, RH, ZA

SUBJECT: ZAMBIAN POLICY ON TRADE WITH SOUTH AFRICA

REF: BLANTYRE 1595

1. IN LIGHT OF SOUTH AFRICAN COMMERCIAL OFFICER'S HOPES OF INCREASING TRADE BETWEEN HIS COUNTRY AND ZAMBIA (REFTEL), FOLLOWING EXCHANGE IN ZAMBIAN PARLIAMENT ON DEC 4 IS OF INTEREST. ASKED BY MP WHAT ZAMBIA IS DOING TO OBTAIN CHEAPER RAW MATERIALS BY IMPORTING FROM NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES REGARDLESS OF POLITICS, MIN OF STATE FOR COMMERCE SYLVESTER TEMBO REPLIED ZAMBIA IS REDUCING ITS TRADE WITH SOUTH AFRICA BECAUSE OF LATTER'S APARTHEID POLICIES. TEMBO ALSO RULED OUT TURNING TO RHODESIA AS SOURCE OF RAW MATERIALS, SAYING ZAMBIA HAS NO INTENTION OF BECOMING "SANCTIONS BUSTER."

2. COMMENT: TEMBO'S STATEMENT IS SOMEWHAT
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DISINGENUOUS. ALTHOUGH IT IS TRUE THAT ZAMBIANS

ARE ATTEMPTING CUT DOWN ON IMPORTS OF AGRICULTURAL AND RAW MATERIALS FROM SOUTH AFRICA, LATTER COUNTRY REMAINS A MAJOR SUPPLIER OF MINING EQUIPMENT TO ZAMBIA. MAJOR SHIFT TO ALTERNATIVE SUPPLIERS OF SUCH EQUIPMENT WOULD NOT ONLY BE MORE COSTLY BUT WOULD INVOLVE MAJOR PROBLEMS IN SHIPPING AND STANDARDIZATION FOR MINES WHICH RELY HEAVILY ON SOUTH AFRICAN EQUIPMENT.

3. LOCAL PRESS HAS SAID THAT SO LONG AS APARTHEID REMAINS SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR ZAMBIANS TO PUT ASIDE POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS WHICH NOW INHIBIT OPEN ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. WHILE ZAMBIAN COMMITMENT TO ECONOMIC SACRIFICE AND INCONVENIENCE FOR PRINCIPLE IS WELL KNOWN, WE BELIEVE SITUATION COULD CHANGE IF AND WHEN THERE IS REAL MOVEMENT ON RHODESIAN PROBLEM. BORDER MIGHT THEN BE REOPENED BECAUSE OF USEFUL FLEXIBILITY THIS GIVES LAND-LOCKED ZAMBIA.
WILKOWSKI

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